HARNESSING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO COMBAT NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Gavin Firdaus

Research Scholars Program, Harvard Student Agencies, In collaboration with Learn with Leaders

ABSTRACT

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and obesity remain one of the leading global health challenges. NCDs are responsible for approximately 41 million deaths annually, accounting for around 74% of global fatalities. Effective detection, treatment, and management of NCDs are essential in addressing this pressing issue. While traditional methods often fall short in providing comprehensive solutions, this research paper explores the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in benefiting individuals diagnosed with NCDs through advanced detection, personalized treatment planning, and effective management. By integrating AI, tailored treatment options can be automated, accounting for genetic, lifestyle, and environmental factors. Through an analysis of past research and articles, this study aims to demonstrate how AI technology can not only optimize personalized care, but also enhance precision and accessibility, making treatment more cost-effective. It was found that AI is positioned as a promising and innovative tool for addressing the global challenge of non-communicable diseases.

KEYWORDS: Non-Communicable Diseases, AI, Personalized Treatment, Detection, Management, Healthcare, Cost-Effective Solutions, Global Health

INTRODUCTION

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as diabetes, obesity, and heart disease, have become some of the most significant global health challenges of the 21st century. Traditional healthcare delivery models often struggle to address the increasing demand and associated costs effectively. Artificial Intelligence (AI) offers transformative potential in tackling NCDs, providing solutions for early detection, personalized treatment, and continuous patient monitoring. By leveraging AI, healthcare systems can develop advanced care models that better understand patient needs, accurately predict complications, optimize treatments, personalize guidance, and reduce overall healthcare expenses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. **"Artificial intelligence approaches to physiological parameter analysis in the monitoring and treatment of non-communicable diseases: A review"**
   This study explores how data from various sources, including clinical environments and wearable devices, can serve as evidence for diagnosing patients with NCDs. It highlights the significant potential of advanced AI algorithms in utilizing continuous monitoring data to develop treatment models and predict future health complications. By doing so, AI can contribute to reducing medical costs and improving overall healthcare outcomes.

2. **"Non-communicable Diseases, Big Data, and Artificial Intelligence"**
   This paper focuses specifically on obesity, identifying the limitations of current diagnostic methods. It argues that such limitations can be addressed through AI-driven personalized treatments for nutritional guidance, accounting for genetic, dietary, and environmental differences. The research includes a program involving 93 participants, where AI was employed to collect and analyze data, demonstrating its capability to create tailored treatments and enhance the precision of care.

3. 3. **"Artificial Intelligence and Data Technology Provide Smarter Healthcare for NCDs"**
   This source illustrates how AI streamlines healthcare processes. For example, AI-assisted software has been shown to reduce radiation therapy planning time by 30%. The paper also discusses how AI can leverage extensive databases to devise more personalized treatment plans. These innovations underscore AI's potential to optimize treatment planning, enhance personalization, and significantly reduce medical expenses, showcasing the value of data-driven approaches in healthcare.

4. 4. **"Ethics of Artificial Intelligence in Medicine"**
   This study emphasizes the ethical considerations surrounding AI's application in medicine, focusing on issues such as trust, accountability, bias, and privacy. It highlights the importance of integrating "real-world data" while addressing these ethical challenges. The paper takes a rational perspective on the responsibilities associated with AI implementation and urges caution to ensure ethical practices in its use within medical contexts

METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a secondary qualitative methodology to investigate the benefits and challenges of utilizing Artificial

Intelligence (AI) to address non-communicable diseases (NCDs). The study draws on existing literature, reports from global health organizations, and peer-reviewed articles to explore AI's potential in enhancing personalized treatment, improving diagnostic accuracy, and optimizing healthcare costs.

The choice of a qualitative approach enables a nuanced analysis of the themes surrounding AI in healthcare, such as its integration into diagnostic tools and its impact on healthcare equity. Secondary sources were selected to provide a broad understanding of AI's implications across different healthcare systems without requiring primary data collection.

However, this methodology has inherent limitations, including dependence on the scope and reliability of available studies, which may not address all contextual or emerging applications of AI. Despite these constraints, the secondary qualitative approach effectively synthesizes existing knowledge to offer valuable insights into the transformative role of AI in tackling NCDs.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION
Benefits of AI in Planning Treatments and Monitoring Patients

AI has recently gained significant traction, rapidly embedding itself into the medical field. It presents a promising solution to the growing epidemic of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) by facilitating the creation of more optimized treatment programs. According to an article published by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2024) titled *"Artificial Intelligence and Data Technology Provide Smarter Healthcare for NCDs,"* AI has proven effective in optimizing and accelerating treatments. For example, in Slovakia, a new technology has reduced the average time spent by a radiation oncologist planning radiation therapy by at least 30%. The same article also references "The Unified Electronic System for Cancer Data Collection," which compiles comprehensive data on cancer patients and records every step of their management. These examples illustrate how AI can streamline healthcare processes to address NCDs by enabling faster and more efficient planning. Through automation, AI can significantly simplify treatment planning and, with the right databases, create personalized treatment strategies tailored to specific situations.

Another example is found in the research paper, "Real-World Data for Precision Public Health of Noncommunicable Diseases: A Scoping Review," published in BMC Public Health. This study analyzed six databases to explore the use of "real-world data" in developing a population health surveillance method. The findings highlight the potential of integrating "real-world data" with AI to enhance precision in addressing NCDs. These insights underline how AI, coupled with robust data, can support the development of precise surveillance tools, thereby addressing NCDs as a global issue.

Thus, the global challenge of NCDs can be effectively mitigated by leveraging AI technologies for optimized treatment planning, personalized care, and the development of innovative surveillance tools.

Looking at the Usage of AI from a Financial Perspective

AI also demonstrates the potential to reduce healthcare costs, making treatments more accessible and affordable on a global scale. According to an article by Ramirez-Bautista et al. (2023) titled *"Artificial Intelligence Approaches to Physiological Parameter Analysis in the Monitoring and Treatment of Non-Communicable Diseases: A Review,"* using AI to analyze data from continuous monitoring can help create cost-effective treatment models. This capability reduces medical expenses by predicting future health complications and improving planning efficiency.

The WHO (2021) article titled *"Artificial Intelligence and Data Technology Provide Smarter Healthcare for NCDs"* further emphasizes that AI and digital tools can enhance the affordability of healthcare for NCDs. By optimizing treatment planning, AI has the potential to make medical services more accessible to low- and middle-income populations. For instance, a hypothetical application on mobile devices could democratize access to personalized treatment plans worldwide.

These examples highlight how AI can reduce healthcare expenses, paving the way for equitable and accessible treatment options for NCD patients across diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

The Ethical Limitations and Issues of Artificial Intelligence

Despite its immense potential, the integration of AI into healthcare raises significant ethical concerns that must be addressed before widespread adoption. A paper published in PubMed Central by the National Library of Medicine, *"Ethics of Artificial Intelligence in Medicine,"* outlines key ethical issues, including trust, accountability, bias, privacy, and responsibility.

Trust poses a considerable challenge, as the decision-making processes of AI systems may appear less transparent and reliable compared to human physicians. Additionally, accountability becomes ambiguous when systematic errors occur—it is often unclear whether the responsibility lies with the developer, healthcare provider, or institution. Privacy concerns also emerge as AI systems rely on extensive datasets, raising the risk of sensitive information misuse. Furthermore, AI systems may perpetuate or exacerbate existing healthcare disparities through inherent biases.

These ethical challenges underscore the need for careful consideration and regulation to ensure the responsible application of AI in addressing NCDs.

Thus, while AI offers transformative potential in planning treatments, reducing costs, and addressing NCDs, its adoption must be balanced with a rigorous examination of ethical implications. By addressing these challenges, AI can be harnessed as a powerful tool to tackle one of the most pressing global health issues of our time.

CONCLUSION

Artificial intelligence (AI) presents transformative potential in addressing the global challenge of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including diabetes and obesity. By facilitating personalized treatment and precise monitoring, AI can significantly reduce healthcare costs and improve accessibility across diverse socioeconomic groups. However, the integration of AI into healthcare systems raises critical ethical concerns, particularly regarding trust, accountability, and privacy. Addressing these challenges through cautious and well-regulated implementation is essential to fully harness AI's capacity to combat NCDs effectively and equitably.

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